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EAST AND WEST SERIES

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RABINDRANATH TAGORE AND OTHER TALKS

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EAST AND WEST SERIES

[Monthly]

An Interpreter of the Life of the Spirit

RABINDRANATH TAGORE AND OTHER TALKS

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FOREWORD

We live in stirring times. Man has reached the moon! A new age is about to open. May it be an age of new understanding,—of our True Self and of all that is around us!

In this new age, I believe, we shall grow, from more to more, in the consciousness that we are, essentially, children of the Spirit, children of God. Man is two percent physical, ninetyeight percent mental and spiritual. And yet is it not true that the physical claims most of,—almost all,—our attention and time and energy?

In the following pages have been brought together some of Beloved Dādā's (Sri T. L. Vaswani's) talks on Rabindranath Tagore and Rumi, on Bāb and the Baha'i Faith, on Mahomed and al-Ghazāli, on Sādhu Hirānand and Ibn Khaldoun. All these great ones have urged that man is a child of God.

I am a child of God! You are a child of God! We all are children of God! How often do we think of Him in the hustle and bustle, the rush and hurry of our daily life? How often?

We have a number of appointments to keep everyday. Let us not forget to keep our appointment with God! Let us meet Him, again and again, in prayer and meditation. And in the midst of our daily work let us speak to Him the word of our loving heart :—"Beloved! I love Thee : and Thou dost love me. And that is all I need!"

In one of his most moving prayers in the *Gitānjali*, Tagore says :—"That I want Thee, only Thee,—let my heart repeat without end. All desires that distract me, day and night, are false and empty to the core."

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To his countrymen, Prophet Mahomed declared :—"Oh men! you are paupers in need of God!" And when Bāb,—the first Baha'i Prophet,—was cruelly persecuted, he said to his followers :—"Worship God even when you go to the fire!" Sādhu Hirānand was a college student when he fervently prayed :—"Father! may I ever aspire to be Thy faithful child!"

Beloved Dādā gave us a simple prayer, many years ago:—

O Mother mine!
Make me Thine!
Make my life divine!

The "life divine" is a life of aspiration to the Eternal and service of the poor and broken ones. For the poor, Beloved Dādā said, are the pictures of God.

To this "life divine" bore witness all the great ones concerning whom Beloved Dādā speaks to us in the following pages. It was an Indian poet saint who sang :—

"Why so impatient, my heart? He who watches over birds and beasts and insects, He who cared for you whilst you were yet in your mother's womb,—shall He not care for you now that you are come forth?

"O my heart, how could you turn from the smile of your Lord and wander so far from Him? You have left your Beloved and are thinking of others, and this is why all your work is in vain."

True it is, that so many, today, have turned "from the smile of the Lord and wandered so far from Him." Man, alas! is become a wanderer,—wandering away from the "Root," the "Centre" of life. And in all our wandering, the Life Divine still doth call us. How many of us will hearken to the call?

J. P. VASWANI

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RABINDRANATH TAGORE*

LET my first word be one of greeting to the College "Culture Group." I greet you, again, with love and humility in my heart.

A Russian friend of mine defined the word, "culture," as "cultur." The word "ur" is "light": and culture, he said, is the "cult of light,"—the cult of radiance. And we are met together, today, to honour the memory of one who was, essentially, a man of light, a man of radiance.

Over a century ago, Europe began to take some interest in real India. Wilkins published the first English translation of the *Bhagavad Gitā*. Then Monier Williams translated the drama *Shakuntalā* into English. Then came the great Frenchman Perron : he translated the *Upanishads* from the Persian of Prince Dārā. Then appeared a few other books revealing the beauty of Indian thought, the grandeur of Indian wisdom.

The German student of literature, Schlegel, appeared and, to crowded audiences, he interpreted the thought of the ancient culture of the Rishis. The great thinker, the world-thinker, whose thought thrilled the universities of Germany, the great German thinker, Schopenhaeur, was absorbed in a study of the *Upanishads* and said:—"The *Upanishads* are the solace of my life : the *Upanishads* shall be the solace of my death." Many years later, appeared Arnold's book named, *The Song Celestial*. This book, as you know, is a rendering in rhythmical English of the *Bhagavad Gitā*. So, was Europe being slowly prepared to receive the message

* Being notes of Beloved Dadaji's [Sri T. L. Vaswani's] presidential address at the Tagore Anniversary Meeting held at the H. R. College of Commerce, Hyderabad.

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of India, to understand the wisdom of India's Rishis.

When Tagore's *Gitānjali* appeared, the West was filled with wonder. "These poems have stirred my blood, as nothing has for years," wrote the poet, Yeats. An English man greeted Tagore as " a seer from the realm of Indian wisdom." An English lady said :—"Compared to Tagore we all appear as savages." The *Gitānjali* at once placed Tagore in the front rank of literature. Some of the poems, indeed, I had heard in the Bengali language. During my brief but beautiful stay in Bengal, I loved to listen to the songs of Tagore. But, I confess, when I read these songs in the *Gitānjali*, in English, my heart was thrilled as it never had been before. The *Gitānjali* is one of the great books in literature.

There are many, I know, to whom the *Bhagavad Gitā* is still an unknown scripture. To me the *Gitā* has been the master-inspiration to my life : and I can hardly express my gratitude to the *Gitā*. But I know there are many in India and many in the West to whom the *Gitā* conveys but little meaning. Yet to them the *Gitānjali* is a book of illumination and inspiration. They know not that Tagore himself owed not a little to the inspiration of the *Gitā* and the other *Upanishads*. In that beautiful, little book of Tagore,—and I wish you, young friends of the College, to read that book,—in that little book, Tagore's autobiography named *Reminiscences*, the poet says that his inspiration came to him "from the *Upanishads* and from Bengal's Vaishnava poets." To me the *Gitā* is the profoundest philosophic poem in literature, and the *Gitānjali*, I regard, as a book of some of the profoundest lyrics in literature.

Why do I call the *Gitānjali* a great book? A great book is a bridge and a bond. The *Gitānjali* is a bridge between East and West, and a bond of union with humanity. Over and over again, Tagore sounds the note universal.

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I wonder if you have ever asked yourselves the question :– What is the meaning of the word, "Tagore"? This word, "Tagore," is a modern form of the ancient Indian word, "Thakur." And the word "Thakur" means "Master." To many, indeed, in many parts of the world, I know Tagore is a Master. Gurudev Tagore,—they call him still in Sāntiniketan. This great Master sounds the note universal. In a book of his which he regarded as his greatest book,—*Nationalism*,—Tagore urges that all the nations are members of Universal Humanity and they need, therefore, to understand one another in the light of the spirit of humanity.

He has a sage's insight, a patriot's vital hope. His songs to the Motherland sound a new note and are a positive contribution to literature. His *Sonār Banglā* ("Golden Bengal") is a wondrous utterance of the glory and valour and nature-beauty of the Poet's native land. His songs are rich in yearning and patriotic love for the rivers and mounts, the hills and rills, the rice-fields and rich plains, the trees and stars of India. His poems of patriotism sound the note :—India must not lose her own self. And the anxiety of his heart is that India must not, in the distractions of these days, become "the Disinherited." India will be great in the measure she is true to the heritage of her Sages. This heritage is Spiritual Idealism. The picture in his heart is that of a Free India. But he does not confound Freedom with the worship of power. India must be joyous, beautiful and free!

TAGORE is a poet of life : he is not a poet of the cloister or the cell. Tagore is not an ascetic : but he recognises the value of *tapasyā*. When a distinguished man of the West, Prof. Levi, paid a visit to Sāntiniketan, Tagore greeted him, and Tagore read to him an address of welcome. In the

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course of this address, unfolding his ideals of education, Tagore pointed out that he was trying,—as the Rishis did in ancient India,—to build education in "*tapoban*" and "*tapasyā*."

"Tapoban" is "forest," is "Nature," is communion of the soul with the Infinite in the heart of boundless space and Nature's peace and limitless light. Far from the madding crowds is the Sāntiniketan : the Poet's educational colony is planted in the *tapoban*. There Nature may be seen in beauty and grandeur : the stars look on you in loveliness, and the great sun peeps through the wide peepul trees. There, far from noises and shouts, you have songs of birds by day and the magic of the moon by night.

Tapoban is the first principle of education. The second principle of education is *tapasyā*. And Tagore interprets the spirit of *tapasyā* in beautiful words. *Tapasyā* does not mean that you retreat from life : *tapasyā* does not mean that you cover your body with ashes and dust. No; take glory in the beauty and the joy of life, said Tagore, again and again.

What, then, is *tapasyā? Tapasyā*, Tagore points out, is disinterestedness in study and life. In knowledge and in action be disinterested "for the fulfilment of the soul which once belonged to India," says Tagore. And I recall the teaching of Sri Krishna unto his beloved disciple on the Kurukshetra :—"Arjuna! Arjuna! work but cling not to fruits of action. Surrender the fruits of action at the Lotus-feet of the Lord." This is *tapasyā*. Build knowledge in *tapasyā*, in disinterestedness. And when you are called upon to act, see that you act, too, in the spirit of *tapasyā*, in disinterestedness.

Tagore, then, was no ascetic. Tagore was a lover of life. Tagore says he yearns "to express the fullness of life, its beauty and perfection." Tagore was a poet of life. And, in book after book, as I have read it, the Poet interprets to

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us some of the great principles of life. Love the life which is life indeed. Do not run away from life, youngmen! In the coming days which, I believe, are going to be difficult days, in the coming days of India's national unfolding, you and such as you in other parts of India are called upon to face difficult problems,—problems of education and action, problems of agriculture and industry, problems of economics and social progress, problems of organisation and national advance, problems of that real freedom which India has yet to achieve.

Tagore sings of action: Tagore sings of life. And Tagore interprets to us some of the great principles of life. The first principle is reverence,—reverence for life. For this life is a wondrous thing. You mustn't trifle with it. This life is a mighty force. The ancient Rishis called it *shakti, akhand shakti, anant shakti.* Whence cometh it? Who knows? But it flows into you, it flows into all, it flows into you everyday. Have reverence for life.

In his plan of education, Tagore urged that teachers and students must have reverence for life. An educational institution must be filled with the spirit of reverence. Let the student have reverence for the teacher : let the teacher have reverence for the student. So may you build up a true school, a true college. Reverence for the *guru* and reverence for the pupil, too : for in every pupil, in every one of you, my young friends, is a mighty power, a *shakti.* You have but to release it, and India will be new. Release, unfold and develop the eternal energy that lies hidden in your hearts and India will be a nation of the strong, a nation of the free.

A voice called him, the great poet, the great mystic, the great lover of beauty, the great lover of life :—"Arise, O poet! and cross seas and lands and burn the hearts of men and women with your words." And Tagore moved out

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on his travels to the West and his travels in the East. He went to Europe, visiting many countries, until he reached Russia. And he went to Japan and he went to America. And every where he gave the message of life,—reverence for life.

The second principle of life, Tagore interprets is love. Tagore loved birds and leaves and children. In one of his novels, he has a significant passage which says :—"The truth of truths is love and love is deathless." In another passage he says :—"Love is the ultimate truth." So he calls the world a "festival."

But I promised myself that I shall not speak to you long. I shall feel happy if what little I have said lingers in some hearts. Tagore, I regard, as God's great gift to modern India. I ask you, this day, sacred to the memory of Rabindranath Tagore, to build your lives in reverence and love : out of these two will grow within you a preception of the beauty of simplicity.

THINK not, taught Tagore, that you are alone. For the One Life, the Great Life is pouring itself perpetually into you everyday. This Life, the great Cosmic Life, which Bernard Shaw refers to, again and again, as "Life-force,"—this hidden Energy that lies in the heart of every one of you, Tagore personifies in one of his poems, and Tagore says :—"He comes, comes, ever comes." This Cosmic Life is being perpetually poured into every one of you. He comes, says Tagore, in the darkness of the night. He comes in "the rainy gloom on the thundering chariots of clouds." He comes, says Tagore, "where the tiller is tilling and the poor man sits in tattered clothes and starved." Yes : the poor are forms of this One Life : so bow down to the poor in reverence and serve them as best as you can. "He comes," says Tagore, "as the toiler and the teacher." So

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have reverence for the toiler, too : have reverence for the worker, for the peasant, for everyone who works with his hand. Have reverence, too, for the teacher, for the man of illuminated brain and illuminated heart. "Through the forest-path, He comes," says Tagore. Yes,—in the *tapoban*, He comes to bless those who are gathered together to study and to grow in knowledge.

"He comes through the Forest Path." Yes! And may I not, in all humility, add these words to what the Master has said :—"He comes in storm and in revolution"? Yes,—He cometh, He cometh, He cometh in the "crises" that I see before me. He is coming to India that has for centuries suffered. He is coming to this Ancient Land in "storm" and in "revolution." Do not run away from Him to knock at alien doors! Give up a-begging, give up the game of imitation! To you He comes in the "storm" of things, in the "revolution" of life. Arise! ye youths! and greet your Lord!

I WILL not easily forget what I experienced for a moment, some years ago, when I paid a visit to Sāntiniketan. Room after room I saw, until I stood in the room in which Tagore had spent the last days of his earth-life before he left for his fated operation in Calcutta. I stood in Tagore's room and big tears stood in my eyes : and I saw around me the reminders that genius, too, must die! And then, there surged within my heart the mighty words of the Lord in the *Bhagavad Gitā* :—"Never the Spirit was born and the Spirit shall cease to be never! Birthless and deathless and changeless remaineth the Spirit for ever. Death hath not touched it, dead though the house of it seems." And I verily believe the Master is not dead : death has not touched Tagore. Rabindranath, the man of light, the radiant man,—him I salute, today, as an immortal of history. And may his benedictions rest upon you for ever and ever more!

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EDUCATION AND THE WITNESS OF ISLĀM*

I AM not a *sādhu*. Call me, if you will, a seeker and a servant. A seeker of the First and only Fair, and a servant of His Servants called by different names,—prophets, rishis, sages, saints. And in speaking to you this evening, I breathe out an aspiration that every word of mine may be uttered in truth and humility, in faith and love. To you I speak not as to strangers but as to friends, to brothers and sisters. And I pray to Him, that He, our One Adored King, may so bless me that my words this evening may be scattered like sparks in your hearts!

What is Education? What witness does Islām bear to the principles and ideals of education? We live, today, in a period of crisis, of change and transition. And we need in these days above all gifts, one gift, the gift of understanding. In my heart is the prayer of Soloman :—"Give me understanding, and I shall keep the Law." Education, as I conceive of it, is meant to develop the perceptive power of understanding.

There are two words a teacher must keep in mind :—(1) Education; and (2) study. The word "Education" is derived from "e," "out" and "duco," "I lead." Education is that which "leads" us "out" of darkness into light. Education leads us out of prejudices into understanding. And the word "study" is derived from "studio," which means "to be eager." Education develops "eagerness" to "understand." We need to understand one another and our schools must not become more academies divorced from life.

* Being notes of a lecture delivered by Beloved Dādā [Sri T. L. Vaswani] before a gathering of educationists in West Pakistan.

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Education is not a mere study of books: and a truly educated man is not one who has merely secured University certificates. Our schools and colleges should integrate experiences of pupils to life, the whole of life. True education must relate experiences to life. A school must be a centre of living forces, a centre of that true culture which relates the pupil to what is around him.

In the evolution of Islām have appeared a number of great ones, mystics, thinkers, heroes of action, builders of constitutions, artists and poets. From those I select but three : in them I see reflected the integral view of education.

At the forefront is the Prophet, Mahomed. In his "Sayings," I find pearls of educational wisdom. I don't wonder that the American sage, Thoreau, carried in his pocket, a copy of that little book, *Sayings of Mahomed*, published many years ago in the "Wisdom of the East Series." Another great teacher appeared in the 11th century : he taught in the University of Baghdād. Al-Ghāzali is his name,—a distinguished name in the history of human culture. I think of yet another, named Ibn Khaldoun. He came in the 14th century. Jalal-ud-din, too, was a great one of Islām : but he was, essentially, a poet : he was a thinker only as a great artist is, also, a thinker.

Listen now to what the first great teacher in the history of Islām says :—"Oh men! you are paupers in need of God! God alone is rich! Magnify Him!" On these words I have loved to meditate, again and again. "Oh men! you are paupers in need of God!" Will our schools and colleges try to understand this truth? I know a number of young men are eager to study and anxious to get University degrees : but they study with a view to make money. To such men Mahomed says :—Realise that you are paupers,—in need of God! "God alone is rich!" Yes, God is the

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only wealth of life!

Again, in another passage, I read the following words :—"Doth any one desire greatness? All greatness is in God. Terrible punishment awaits the planner of iniquity. He is the King : He is the Mighty : He is the Peaceful : He is the Wise!" I am reminded of a number of young men who seek not wealth but earthly honours, the "greatness" of the world. They seek power and position. Will such young men listen to the wise words of the Prophet :—"All greatness is in God?" Seekers of the earthly honours are, often, "planners of iniquity" and terrible is their punishment. True education prepares the student not for the greatness built in iniquity and sin, in crime and conscience-killing. True education trains the pupil for the service of God and man..

CENTURIES after Mahomed appeared and worked the wonder of his life in far-off Arabia, came the second great Teacher, al-Ghazāli. In him, the scholar was blended with the mystic. For some years, he taught as professor at the University of Baghdād. This great philosopher and mystic of Islām has written a book called by the significant title,—*Oh Child!* The book is charged, through and through, with educational wisdom. And you must begin with children, if you would educate aright. In this book, al-Ghazāli refers to "eight insights" into life. I will not, for lack of time, speak of them this evening. I refer to al-Ghazāli because I wish to acknowledge my debt to this great teacher.

Three centuries after al-Ghazāli came the third great teacher, Ibn Khaldoun. Competent Western critics have called him "the greatest intellect of his century." He was the greatest intellect of the fourteenth century. He wrote a monumental book, named *Universal History*. In this book,

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this profound thinker and historian relates education to civilisation and indicates the right place of history in education. What is history? Has it a meaning and a message? How has man marched on, from century to century, passing through different stages? How has he climbed up the ladder of evolution, step by step, from savagery to civilisation? And how may man march on still, through struggle and strife, to the summit of civilisation?

Universal History is a wonderful book. In it the great Islamic teacher interprets civilisation with reference to social, intellectual and climatic conditions. In this book, this great one of the Muslim Faith, anticipates, by centuries, some of the conclusions arrived at by Vico in Italy, by Buckle in England, by Herder in Germany, by Mantesquieu and Taine in France. A marvellous book this, written by a marvellous man, a man as great in mind as he was simple and humble in life.

THE integral ideal emphasises some aspects of education. To four of these only may I have the time to invite your kind attention, this evening. And the first is,—synthesis of culture. Let me quote the Prophet again :—"Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave!" And he tells us further :—"Seek knowledge everywhere." Never think that when you leave your college, you have done with education. Knowledge is blended with the life-process : and to knowledge you must cling from the cradle to the grave.

Culture is synthesis. And in the day Islam was truly great, centuries ago, Islam was not afraid of the inspiration of Greek and Hindu types of culture. Centuries ago, when Europe was in darkness, Islam held aloft the torch of science and culture, and Islam was not afraid of learning mathematics from Hindus, as Hindus were not afraid of learning

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medicine from Muslims. For culture is exchange of thought with thought. Culture is mingling of mind with mind.

Arabian thinkers studied Aristotle and introduced him to Christian thinkers. Islam built, in Spain, the great Universities of Cordova and Seville : and Greek and Jewish systems of thought were studied, side by side, with the culture of Arabia. In the period of Renaissance, Christians found a model for their Universities in the colleges of the Moors : Christians looked to Muslims for light in philosophy and science.

Synthesis of knowledge, fellowship in culture, inspire Islamic thought. I recall the words of the great representative of Islamic culture in modern India, the words of Iqbal, the great Indian poet, the great Asian poet. The words thrill me, touch my eyes with tears. In one of his poems, this great thinker and poet of India said :—"A new verse was revealed to me in the jail:—If the *Gitā* contains the *Qur'an*, the *Qur'an*, also, contains the *Gitā* !" There spoke a man who had a synthetic view of culture.

ANOTHER note sounded by Islam, in its educational philosophy, I think, may be indicated thus :—Blend the intellectual with the manual. This aspect of education has, I am afraid, been much neglected in our days. May I remind you, friends, of one generalisation of history? Agriculture and handicrafts are the foundation of civilisation. Are you eager to build a new, prosperous and progressive nation? Make agriculture and handicrafts the basis of education. Without agriculture and handicrafts civilisation decays. Life is enriched by manual work : the hands nourish the brain. So in the days of early Khalifas and, in later days, in the Universities of Mesopotamia and mediaeval Spain, students were taught handicrafts.

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The Prophet himself bore witness to the dignity and beauty of manual work. He stitched and mended clothes: and he mingled with the artisans and the masons : and he took up brick after brick to build a mosque. Schools in India have neglected manual work : and we witness, today, the unhealthy economic and social effects of mere intellectual learning. If you will truly educate the pupil, teach him to burn bricks, to saw the wood into planks, to build a cottage, to use hammer and chisel, to cultivate a garden, to work in a farm.

Not a few of the educated persons in our day fight shy of manual labour : they would sit in the office with cigarettes in their mouths, and pens in their hands! Alas! our graduates are not aware of the dignity of labour : and many of them think they are superior to craftsmen and labourers! True education should teach us not to stand aloof from peasants and workers but to mingle with them and salute them as our comrades.

YET another note sounded by Islām relates education to "good life." Education is more than the reading of books. Education, as I said at the very outset, is related to life. Students must grow in "good life" : they must aspire to a life of righteousness. "Show us the right path,"—said Mahomed.

May I hurriedly refer to some of the elements which enter into good life? One is love of justice. Plato, as some of you remember, taught that justice was the pillar of the state.

Another element which enters into good life is simplicity. Look at the Prophet! How simple and how just he was in his treatment to Jews and Christians!

The third element which enters into good life is humility. Here, too, Mahomed is a shining example to us all.

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The fourth element is toleration. Above all, remember, brotherhood is essential to good life. And is not brotherhood the basis of true democracy? The Prophet emphasises, again and again, the truth that we all are brothers! "All God's creatures are God's family,"—he said.

THERE is time to refer, in brief, to only one other note,—the fourth important note,—of Islām in education. The great message has been proclaimed, again and again, by the great ones of Islām that life is a gift from God to you to give it in service to the poor and suffering ones. To live is to give! "I am a servant," said the Prophet. And every one who would be truly educated must train himself in the school of service. "If you wish to love your Creator," said Mahomed, "love your fellow beings first." And again :—"Give the poor the wealth which God has given you. In the wealth of the rich, the poor have a right." "Oppress not the orphans," said the Prophet, "neither rebuke the beggars : but declare the goodness of thy Lord." The early Khalifās of Islām bore witness, in their daily life, to this ideal of service.

Our schools and colleges need to emphasise this thought that the end of knowledge is service, the end of education is sympathy, the end of culture is love. Let the students be taught to understand aright the message of history. History is not hate : history is a call to international understanding, to sympathy, to fellowship with the poor, the needy, the suffering ones. History says :—"Behold the Brotherhood of the truly great ones! It is the Brotherhood of them, who bear the burden and pain of those who suffer, and who bend, not before kings and aristocrats but before the poor, the lowly and the lost!"

What a touching story I read of Hussain,—the martyr of Karbalā! He is sitting at his dinner, and his slave is

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present to serve him. By an accident, a hot dish falls on Hussain's knees. The slave feels nervous and recites a verse from the *Qur'an* :—"Paradise belongeth to him who restraineth his anger."

And Hussain answers :—"I am not angry."

The slave continues :—"Paradise belongeth to him who forgiveth his brother!"

And Hussain says :—"I forgive you!"

And the slave finishes the verse thus :—"For God loves the benevolent."

And immediately answers Hussain :—"I give you liberty. No longer are you my slave. And I give you 400 pieces of silver!"

Yes, God loveth the benevolent : God loveth him who serves the poor : God leveth him who giveth his love to his brethren. This is true Islām, — surrender to the service of the Lord who loveth the poor : dedication to the Divine Ideal which is love of God and love of man. Islām, true Islām is the surrendered life, the dedicated life,—the life of him, the great Prophet of Arabia who, clothed in humble garbs went about with radiant eyes of compassion and love,—went about doing good and blessing the lowly and the lost. And may his benedictions shine and shine upon you for ever and ever more!

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SĀDHU HIRĀNAND*

July 14 is a sacred day in the calender of Young India. On the 14th of July 1893 passed away a patriot who was a saint,—Sadhu Hiranand of Sind.

With affectionate reverence do I bring at his feet my little flowers, year after year. And in the stress and tumult of these days, my thoughts have gone out to him, again and again.

For at his feet I learnt the truth that true freedom is not won without *sādhanā*,—the power of simplicity and self-control, the power of the soul.

There is an inner kingdom,—a kingdom of souls. To this Hiranand bore witness. To this has India borne witness in all the vital periods of her history.

And India must discover herself,—discover the ideals adored by her Sages through the ages.

In this self-discovery, the recovery by India of her own Self, is the secret, as I understand it, of true Swarāj.

We talk of *swadeshi*. Let us not forget that Hiranand was always clad in plain Sindhi home-spun.

We talk of "prohibition." Over two generations ago, Hiranand began in Hyderabad an anti-liquor campaign. And he had no crowds to cheer him. I know some flung mud and stones at him. But he went about doing good. Neither in his *swadeshi* nor his temperance campaign was there the least element of bitterness or hate to the "stranger" or to any of those who would not see eye to eye with him. Hiranand did not picket : he persuaded, he won!

We talk of "national" education. Hiranand founded

* Being notes of an address delivered by Beloved Dādā [Sri T. L. Vaswani] on the occasion of Sadhu Hiranand's Anniversary Day.

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the Academy inspired by the noblest national ideal. And he took not a rupee from the school funds for himself. He lived and laboured for others. And he did not train students for material success : he taught them to express life. He trained the impulses of his pupils not by repression but by the spiritual power of sympathy and love. And the one idea he tried in many ways to impress upon us was that education was meant for service,—of the poor and lowly.

We talk of woman's awakening. Hiranand's whole heart went out in sympathy with her, and he had a programme of education for girls.

His patriotism was of the purest love. He loved the poor and served the sick, with singular devotion. It was in the fitness of things that the Leper Asylum in Karachi was linked up with his blessed name. Studying his life I have, again and again, been reminded of St. Francis of Assisi and of the Japanese patriot, Sonotoku.

Many are the needs of India. Her crying need is,—a new Hiranand!

A mighty change, a cultural spiritual revolution,—is the call of the new age.

Such a revolution never can come by paper-resolutions. Such a revolution,—a new creative life,—may be called up only by dynamic men, by those who have beauty of simplicity, whose eyes are aglow with a longing for the Eternal, and in whose hearts burns a sacrificial Flame.

Of such dynamic men was Sadhu Hiranand. Within him was the spirit of St. Francis. On his life was a spell of the Spirit.

God grant that such a lover of God and servant of man may come again to us! A new Hiranand! One who will fill students and youths, boys and girls, with new inspiration! And gladden the hearts of men with the gladness of a new

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spring! And kindle in many homes the light of a new, dedicated life!

When a member of the "Eagle's Nest" in Calcutta, he kept a journal in which he wrote :—"Father! may I ever aspire to be Thy faithful child!" In another passage he wrote :—"What do you mean to do in life? To win praise and applause? No!" And he proceeds to interpret his dominant aspiration in the words :—"To sacrifice!" And he sacrificed all he had and was in the service of Sind. He died, in 1893, at the early age of 30. He died,—a servant of the poor, and a servant of the young. He served patients in hospitals and the cholera-stricken in Hyderabad-Sind. He went to poor women and widows to succour them. He sowed in the hearts of the students the seed of new education.

His pure gentle life was radiant with a rich light,—the light of simplicity, humility and faith. It was the light of a spirit-filled life. I verily believe Hiranand received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Therefore he became a creator of new life in Sind. And my prayer to God in these days has been :—"O Lord of Life and Love! Give us more such spirit-filled men and women, more such children of the Hidden life,—the children of Light and Love!"

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A PROPHET OF IRAN*

It is kind of you to call me here. I come not as a stranger but as a brother. Coming to you I feel like coming to a centre of my true homeland, the homeland of the soul. I believe the Baha'i Movement is inspired by great ideals. Yours is a brotherhood of the Light.

I come to you on a day, sacred in the calender of your Movement. A century ago, he was cruelly put to death. This day commemorates the day of his martyrdom.

He,—the great one, the first great leader of your Movement,—called himself "Bāb" : the word means the "door." I recall the words of Emerson. In one of his essays, this great American teacher and seer has the following beautiful words. Emerson says:—"Be an opener of the door!" This martyr-prophet, Bāb, opened, I believe the door of God's mercy to many in many lands. The Bāb became a focus, a point,—*nuktā*,—of spiritual forces.

In my heart is a picture of this wonderful man. I see him as a little boy growing, from day to day, in beauty and radiance, in the beautiful city of Shiraz. He grows, from more to more, in the beauty of silence, of communion with God, of fellowship with the Holy Spirit. They ask him to pass examinations. Not in them is his heart. He is a lover of seclusion and meditation. He communes with nature : he is a seeker of the Beloved : he longs for communion with the Spirit within him, the *Shabda Brahman*, as Sri Krishna says in the Gitā. The Bāb grows, from day to day, in the

* Being notes of an address delivered by Beloved Dādā [Sri T. L. Vaswani] at a meeting of the Baha'is on the occasion of the centenary celebrations of the martyrdom of the Bāb. The Bāb was martyred on the 9th of July, 1850.

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beauty of the inner life.

Like Moses and Aaron, like the apostles of the New Testament Church, the Bāb believes that the language of the Spirit, not the language of the schools, will make the world new. The Bāb is not a University man. The Bāb is an original man. The Bab has a great prophetic vision.

Then I think of him as a young man. His period of boyhood is over. He is now a youth radiant with the light of God. He is a young prophet. In 1843, he loses his beloved son, Ahmed. I remember the year 1843 as the year when the British came to my beloved, now far off, Sind. I remember, too, the year 1850 as the year associated with the martyrdom of the Bāb, and with the passing on of one of the great mystics and poets of beloved Sind,—a great one, whom I regard as a saint and prophet, too, a great one who has left us a legacy of rich wisdom in a book which he modestly called *Slokas*.

In 1843, passes away the martyr-prophet's son, Ahmed. Then the Bāb offers a short but touching prayer. The Bāb says :—"O Lord! accept the sacrifice of my son and grant that it be a prelude to my sacrifice to Thee!" The life of the Bāb was a sacrificial life.

In 1844, the Bāb makes a declaration,—surrounded by his dear disciples :—"I stand in the shadow of another greater than I. He is behind the veil of glory. I come to prepare the way for him." And a greater than he, a fuller manifestation of God than the Bāb, appeared in the person of Baha'u'llah.

Of your three great leaders,—the Bāb, Baha'u'llah and Abdul Bahā,—I may not speak this evening. Many years ago, when I was wandering in Europe, moving from place to place, to give the message of India's Rishis, Abdul Bahā had arrived in Europe. Several things I could say concerning him, but this is not the occasion. I shall speak only of

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your first great leader,—the Bāb, to whose memory this day is sacred.

In the midst of his devoted ones he works : and he works quietly. But the *mullāhs* are against him. Always in history there is a conflict between the prophet and the priest. The Bāb speaks of a New Revelation. He is a prophet. The *mullāhs* are priests : they think that God's revelation closed with Mahomed! They persecute the Bāb.

What does he teach to those that are devoted to him? He teaches them that there is one God. He teaches that mankind is one. He asks them to build life in prayer and meditation. He says that woman must be free : her sympathy and intuition are needed to build a new civilisation. Above all, this prophet of God, like the prophets that went before him and like the prophets that came after him,—the Bāb said :—"Serve the poor and lowly."

The *mullāhs* are offended. The story of the persecution of the Bāb is one of the most moving stories that I know of. He is removed from Shirāz to Tabriz. And there they conspire against this man of singular purity, this man of self-realisation, this man of whom I spoke one day as a "God-intoxicated" man. He is persecuted. On one occasion, the Bāb said to his followers :—"Worship God even when you go to the fire!" And the Bāb worships God when they lead him into the fire. For the orders are issued that the Bāb must be shot to death.

They bind him with the ropes : they take him to a firing place. But death has no terrors for him. He looks around : his eyes are touched with tears. He is not afraid of death. There are tears in his eyes when he thinks of how men are wandering in the dark. There are tears in his eyes when he thinks of the sorrows and sufferings of humanity. And with tear-touched eyes, this prophet of God utters words on which my thoughts have dwelt, again and again. Before

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he passes on to his realm of glory, the Bāb utters these words :—"Awake! Awake! The Gate of God's mercy is open! Behold, the new morning light is shining!" May these words sink into the hearts of some of you :—"Behold! the new morning light is shining!"

I recall the words of a Western poet who said :—"Who dies for the love of God, shall rise a star!" The Bāb died for the love of God : therefore the Bāb is not dead. He hath risen as a star. Risen again in his ascended glory, the Bāb shineth now as a star, today, over many lands in Asia and Europe and America.

The Bāb was a Prophet : his kingdom was not of this earth. The great Russian writer,—Dostoivesky,—in his beautiful book, *The Brothers Karamazov*, says :—"Men reject their secular leaders : but they love their prophets and martyrs and honor those whom they have slain." This martyr-prophet kindled a light which has not been put out.

Today, the world is in the wilderness. Today, carnage and slaughter are on the battle-fields of the East. Yet I know East and West are one. The nations are one. All races are one. And all religions have one common centre of inspiration and illumination. Yes,—humanity is one! Yet, today, alas! humanity is wandering in the wilderness. And in my lonely heart I hear the words of this martyr-prophet :—"Awake! Awake! The new morning light is shining!"

May the mighty spirit of this martyr-prophet bless you all! And may the benedictions of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Love, shine and shine upon you for ever and ever more!

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BODY-BUILDING IS NATION-BUILDING*

A VEDIC prayer invokes the Supreme as *Ātmadā, Baladā*. Both are needed,—illumination of the *Ātman* and *bala* of the body.

My cult of *shakti* includes a cult of body-building. This was recognised in Āryavarta. *Yoga*, Patanjali says, is not to be taught to a man who has not a good body. Breathing exercises, club-exercises, wrestling, archery were taught to Āryan students. *Kshatriya* qualities were highly respected.

An Arab writer of the tenth century gave a list of seven social orders in India. The highest of these, curiously enough, is the order of the *kshatriyas*, *brahmins* coming second! The Rājputs held high the traditions of valour and chivalry. The Rājputs of Mewar and Samber resisted, with glorious feats of strength, the strong Arabs, at a time when the Muslims had engulfed Mesopotamia, Iran and Baluchistan. From Baluchistan the Arabs advanced to Sind, but were bravely resisted by the heroic Gehtols.

Ancient India's record is rich in records of able-bodied, heroic Āryans. Recall the story of Sri Rama of blessed memory. Medieval India's record is rich in exploits of the brave Rājputs. Bāppā Rāwal reminds one of Charles Martel, and Rānā Pratāp stands unique in the annals of his age.

Our Āryan ancestors believed intensely in national health, in racial strength. What are we doing to improve the health and strength of the nation? Look at young India! Suffering in height, weight, health, nutrition, alertness! The rapid deterioration of physique, appalling infantile

* Being notes of a talk delivered by Beloved Dādā [Sri T. L. Vaswani] before a rally of youths and students.

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death rate, the large number carried off every year by malaria alone,—supply a sad commentary on the present situation. Hindu society is dying daily!

The current system of education with its emphasis on "cramming" is one cause,—but only one,—of rapid deterioration in the physique of students. There are other causes. The basis of body-building is *brahmacharya*. *Bhoga* is what has ruined many a youth. Control of the senses is wisdom of the body.

In ancient India, every student was a *brahmachāri*. I plead for a new understanding and appreciation and application of the ancient ideal of the simple life. In simplicity is the strength of a nation, in purity the secret of character, in self-control the essence of efficient society. Current education in this country has, for a long time, missed the true end of culture, and so many of our educated young men think more of money than of the true values of life. But, as an eminent educationist, Prof. C. T. Campagnac, has said, "to measure education by material success is disastrous." The country needs more men of plain living and high thinking.

Many of the young men commit four crimes :—(1) they want luxurious foods: these are devitalising foods. (2) They breathe too little. (3) They drink too little water. (4) They hunger for *bhoga*. Soft living is the sin of our young men. Live hard! I say. Many a student in the school or college, takes more care of his dress than his body. He is prone to attach too great a value to a false "philosophy of clothes." He forgets that the secret of beauty is not dress but health of body and mind. He must learn to be simple in diet and dress. It was Edison, the world-famous American, who said :—"The Americans are food-drunk." This may be said, also, of many of the young who frequent hotels in quest of rich luxurious foods. These young men

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want to be "drunk with food." Not in food-intoxication is the secret of health and strength.

The secret lies in plain living and control of passions. I ask the young to lead the simple life. The ancient rule was sound that to receive *vidyā*, the student must be a *brahmachāri*. The ancient rule must be revived. Knowledge and *bhoga* cannot dwell together. Our students must be *brahmacharis*.

Young men must be taught, also, the value of correct diet. They must eat well. This does not mean that they must be luxurious. This means that they must eat foods rich in vitamins. A medical writer speaks highly of the diet of the Punjabi villager which consists, he points out, "of a wholemeal wheat bread, dāl or pulse, vegetables and abundance of milk and ghee." "The Punjabi peasant," he pertinently points out, "enjoys an immunity from many of the diseases of civilisation." On the other hand, he adds, "the British diet is deficient in vitamins, as the Danish and Punjabi diets are rich in them." The Danish diet resembles the Punjabi diet and consists of whole-meal bread, barley porridge, greens, potatoes, milk and butter. The green leaves of vegetables, it is pointed out, are very rich in vitamins. So are nuts of all kinds and beans, peas, tomatoes and salads. Some of these formed the diet of the earlier generations. Today, our students and young men have rejected the good old rule of plain living and are out for fashions and luxuries.

Good simple food is what is needed for health and strength. Not luxuries, not flesh diet, not the heavy hotel food. And the highest happiness is to give ourselves in love and service not merely to our friends and neighbours and countrymen but, also, to those poor creatures who, alas! are daily dragged to the slaughter-house. They, too, are our brothers in the one Kingdom of Life.

Too much emphasis cannot be put upon games and fresh

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air. Physical Culture Leagues are as important as any political league. National spirit expresses itself not only in politics and culture but also in love of games.

India needs a net-work of *akhārās* to revive *kasrat*, Indian club, *dand*, breathing exercises, wrestling. Schools and colleges must organise big athletic exhibitions. Play is more important than examinations. They are responsible for the brain fatigue of not a few of our young men.

It is often complained that Hindus are divided. Play will unite them. In ancient India, physical culture was an integral part of education. Manu places courage first in his list of virtues. And the student in the Āryan āshrama was taught to "play the man."

In Europe, the importance of games is easily recognised. The winner of a boat race is Cambridge is more honoured than a wrangler in mathematics. In Germany, young men are fond of mountain climbing, and the program of the new German youth-movement includes Sunday excursions, when young men walk for miles together and spend the day in fellowship with nature and the farmers. In Finland, the young men's motto is, "enduring physique." The best sportsman is rewarded with a life-long immunity from taxation. Little boys and girls are encouraged to walk in winter's snow several miles every day.

One of the saddest sights in India is that of pale-faced spectacled young men. A craving for comfort has weakened their fibre. They need to be trained in a school of hardness. So it was in ancient India when the greatest emphasis was put upon *brahmacharya*.

Hindu youths must accustom themselves to danger and difficulty. And a new love for physical culture must grow in and outside our schools and colleges. For over a generation, Japan has had a very useful law. It requires three to five hours weekly of physical education for all candidates

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for teachers' posts in normal schools. In Japan, too, there are societies and leagues for encouragement of games. One of the biggest is the "Military Arts Association." Yet another is the "National Physical Education Society," which has nearly two million members. A very good custom in Japan is that of long-distance walking excursions. Here is description given by a competent interpreter of New Japan :—

"These trips last a week or ten days. The boys are divided into companies, each of which is led by a teacher : and these companies are sub-divided into quads of ten or twelve boys with their chiefs who are required to report three times a day to the company captain on the condition of their groups. High school boys think nothing of their doing 25 or 30 miles a day in this manner. Every boy is expected to carry his own extra clothing and whatever else may be deemed necessary in the way of provision for the trip."

One of our immediate needs, I submit, is an All India Physical Culture Association with branches in each province.

To my countrymen, I say :—Believe in the cult of manhood. Be strong. Spread far and wide the message of health, of strength, of will, of freedom of mind and passionate joy in being red-blooded, energetic men.

To Young India I say :—Be simple! Be manly! Be hard!

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NEWS AND NOTES

By A "PILGRIM"

Examination Results :—We are happy to announce that under the grace of God and with the blessings of Beloved Dādā, both the Mira Schools,—St. Mira's High School (Sindhi Medium) and St. Mira's English-Medium School,—showed 100% results at the S. S. C. Examination. A student of St. Mira's English-Medium School,—Shri Devidas Gopaldas Advani,—stood second in General Science among all the students in the Maharashtra State and was given a prize. Our congratulations to Mrs. V. J. Hiranandani, the Principal of St. Mira's High School and to Miss Ishwari G. Malani, the Headmistress of St. Mira's English-Medium School and to the staff and students of both the Schools.

St. Mira's College for Girls, also, showed brilliant results at all the University Examinations, this year. At the Final B. A. Examination, the College showed 100% results. One of the students,—Kumari Shānti Bāru,—stood First in the First class among Economics students and won a University prize.

While the Mira Schools and College are putting forth their best efforts to show brilliant results at the respective examinations, their emphasis is on character-building. The end of education, says Beloved Dādā, is character. And an essential element in character-building is cultivating the spirit of service of the poor and lowly.

Bāl Kunj :—This institution for children has been started by the "Mira Union,"—an association of the ex-students of St. Mira's School. The "Mira Union" works under the guidance and inspiration of Kumari Hari P. Vaswani, ex-Principal of St. Mira's High School. Over a hundred children have already joined the "Bāl Kunj." Most of them are students from Convent Schools and are ignorant of the riches of India's culture. They meet together once a week. They recite *slokas* from the *Gitā* : they

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chant hymns to the glory of God : they sing *kirtan*. Stories from the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata*, the lives and teachings of Heroes and Saints of East and West are passed on to them. They play and they pray : and they are taught to do little deeds of service, everyday.

The nation walks on the feet of the little ones,—says Beloved Dādā. This faith inspires the workers of the "Bāl Kunj." They believe that New India will be built not in the Assembly or the Lok-sabhā, but in small institutions where children are taught to clasp God to their hearts and to seek their purest joy in serving suffering creation.

The Call of Compassion :—*The Call of Compassion* has been published in book form with a beautiful green card cover. The book was "released" by Shri B. K. Chougule, I. A. S.,—President of the S. P. C. A., Poona, and a "friend of every friendless beast,"—at a crowded meeting held in St. Mira's Hall on the 26th of May. In a moving speech, Shri Chougule urged that all life is sacred and birds and animals must be treated by man as his younger brothers and sisters in the one Family of Creation. He paid a glowing tribute to Beloved Dādā and to the humanitarian work which is being carried on at the Mira Campus under Dādāji's ever-living inspiration. Train little children, he said, in acts of kindness towards their fellow creatures, and you will build a new India, a new humanity.

The Call of Compassion is available at Re. 1.50 (4s. 6d. or 75 cents) per copy. Friends are purchasing copies of this publication in bulk and distributing them among students and others. So may the message of love and compassion towards all living things spread far and wide!

Dādā Yagna :—Beloved Dādā's *Yagna* is held, every month, on the sacred *Ekādasi* Day,—the Day on which Beloved Dādā's sacred body was consigned to the flames. The last *Yagna* was observed with a three days' programme (July 8–10). On July 10, hundreds of poor people were fed. Packets of tea, potatoes, onions, and soap cakes were distributed among needy sisters.

Dādā Yagna will be celebrated again on August 8.

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